Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

What is claimed is:

1. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of methyl pheophorbide-a, comprising treating chorin e6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent having a boiling point at least as high as 144°C, the boiling point of 2,6-lutidine.

2. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of methyl pheophorbide-a, comprising:

(a) treating chorin e6 trimethyl ester with a base in ~~a high boiling~~ an aromatic solvent having a boiling point at least as high as 144°C, the boiling point of 2,6-lutidine to give methyl pheophorbide-a ; and

(b) without isolating the methyl pheophobide-a from the resulting reaction mixture, heating the methyl pheophorbide-a to a temperature sufficient to effect decarboxylation and saponification of the methyl pheophorbide-a .

3. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of ether analogs of pyropheophorbide-a, comprising:

(a) treating chorin e6 trimethyl ester with a base in ~~a high boiling~~ an aromatic

solvent having a boiling point at least as high as 144°C, the boiling point of 2,6-lutidine to give methyl pheophorbide-a;

(b) without isolating the methyl pheophobide-a from the resulting reaction mixture, heating the methyl pheophorbide-a to a temperature sufficient to effect decarboxylation and saponification of the methyl pheophorbide-a to give pheophorbide-a; and

(c) treating the pyropheophorbide-a with an acid, followed by an alcohol under basic conditions to effect addition of the alcohol across a vinyl group.

4. (currently amended) The process of claim 3, wherein the alcohol is 1-hexanol (n-hexyl alcohol) to obtain 3-devinyl-3-(hexyloxy)ethyl-pyropheophorbide-a (HPPH).

5. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of purpurin-18, comprising:

~~(a)~~ treating chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent in the presence of air to give purpurin-18 having a $-CH_2CH_2COOH$ group. ~~; and~~

~~(b) re-esterifying the resulting purpurin-18.~~

6. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of ether analogs of purpurin-18, comprising:

~~(a) treating chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent in the presence of air to give purpurin-18;~~

~~(b) re-esterifying the purpurin-18 to obtain purpurin-18 carboxylic acid ester ; and~~

~~(c)~~ treating the ~~re-esterified~~ esterified purpurin- 18 obtained by the steps of claim 9 with an acid, followed by treating with an alcohol under basic conditions.

7. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of purpurinimides, comprising:

(a) treating chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent in the presence of air to give purpurin-18 having a $-CH_2CH_2COOH$ group;

(b) ~~re-esterifying~~ esterifying the $-CH_2CH_2COOH$ group to obtain ~~the~~ purpurin-18 ester; and

(c) treating the ~~re-esterified~~ esterified purpurin-18 with a primary amine.

8. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of ether analogs of purpurinimides, comprising:

(a) treating chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent in the presence of air to give purpurin-18 having a $-CH_2CH_2COOH$ group;

(b) ~~re-esterifying~~ esterifying the $-CH_2CH_2COOH$ group to obtain ~~the~~ purpurin-18 ester;

(c) treating the ~~re-esterified~~ esterified purpurin-18 ester with a primary amine; and

(d) treating the resulting purpurinimide with an acid, followed by an alcohol under basic conditions.

9. (new) A process for the preparation of purpurin-18 ester, comprising:

(a) treating chlorin e_6 trimethyl ester with a base in an aromatic solvent in the presence of air to give purpurin-18 having a $-CH_2CH_2COOH$ group. ; and

(b) esterifying the $-CH_2CH_2COOH$ group.

10. (new) The method of claim 9 where the group is esterified using diazomethane to obtain purpurin 18 methyl ester.

11. (new) The method of claim 2 where the aromatic solvent is *sym*-collidine.